

FOUNDED 1874 ~ CURRENT LOCATION 1961

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Attitude of Gratitude 2024

St. Mary's Lutheran Church's Thankful Giving Campaign

St. Mary's Lutheran Church will be celebrating 150 years of ministry in 2024! Every year, for 150 years, we have individually and collectively determined how we will steward all that God has called us to care for and love – in Kenosha and the world! We do this in many ways – through our time, talents, resources, money, and so much more! Our faith calls us to live and give generously, both to care for one another and our neighbor. We are stewards of what is God's, and it is up to us to discern what a faithful response to God's abundant love for us looks like!

There will be two temple talks in January that will give witness to how the sharing of our time, talent, resources, and financial response serves multiple needs in our St. Mary's faith community, the Kenosha community, and beyond.

In February, we will start the campaign with a distribution of a

Time and Talent Survey and Financial Response Commitment. Our campaign will culminate at the end of February in a Ministry Fair that will involve all the current ministries at St. Mary's! The Ministry Fair will be a good way of seeing how sharing all God has entrusted to us supports the needs of the communities in which we live, work, and worship, inside and outside of the walls of St. Mary's! It will also be a great way to meet others in our worship community!

We welcome your questions and ideas during this time of sharing God's grace. As we gather, we will examine what it means to reflect an attitude of gratitude and live into what it means to be God's people, followers of Jesus Christ, gifted by the Spirit! Go Pray! Go Love! Go Serve!

Continue to watch for more communications regarding our 150 years of ministry celebration!

The mission of St. Mary's Lutheran Church is to be a fellowship of believers, called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit, to bear witness to Jesus Christ in the community and in the world. We equip ourselves for our mission by: Prayer, Worship, Education. Enabling us to witness through: Evangelism, Service, Stewardship.

WE ARE

GOD'S PEOPLE

FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST

GIFTED BY THE SPIRIT

Go Pray

Go Love

Go SERVE

THANKS BE TO GOD!

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks, in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessaloníans 5:16-18

INTERIM PASTOR, PASTOR KATHY BROWN

Grace and peace to you as we welcome 2024!

With the beginning of the new year, many folks make resolutions. They may involve losing weight (especially after holiday feasting), getting more physically fit, giving up certain habits, setting particular goals or achievements, or engaging in a new activity or hobby. Of course, many of the resolutions are left by the wayside as we mark off the days on the calendar and our lives are filled with distractions and temptations that draw us away from keeping our resolutions.

During the month of January, the lectionary texts appointed for worship begin with John the Baptist calling for repentance. The Greek term metanoia indicates a change of mind, a reorientation, a fundamental transformation of outlook, of man's vision of the world and of himself, and a new way of loving others and God. Perhaps, rather than all those specific resolutions we make, that often find a way of being forgotten, would be better addressed by repentance, that reorientation of our hearts, minds, and, in turn, our actions.

Following John's call to repentance, we have Jesus' call of his disciples. He finds Philip and says to him, "Follow me." Philip finds Nathaniel and urges him to come with him to see the one about whom Moses and the prophets had written. Then, Jesus calls four fishermen, Simon, Andrew, James and John to follow him. When they do, it would mean a great deal of reorientation for them, a change in their outlooks and view of the world. They would begin to see the world as God sees it through the words and actions of Jesus.

In this new year their will be abundant opportunities to engage in ministry both inside and outside the four walls of St. Mary's. There will be a call of a new pastor which brings with it its own excitement, but likely also questions, doubts, and maybe even fear. That's common to any transition, just like the one that Jesus called those first disciples to make. Through it all, God was with them and is with us. May we orient or reorient ourselves

in our relationship with our triune God that we might more clearly discern the call that God has on our lives, individually and communally, and may we trust that God will be with us in living out that call.

Peace in Christ, Pastor Kathy



Happy New Year, St. Mary's Community!

During the holidays, I hope you were able to take time to stop, pause and remember the reason for the season, the birth of the Christ Child.

2024 should be an exciting year for the ministries of St. Mary's starting with January.

- The gym will be transformed into a room of "TREASURES" with the annual Youth rummage sale (Jan 6-7).
- The middle school youth will be attending their winter retreat.
- Church leaders will be gathering together to continue working together to serve the ministries of St. Mary's Lutheran church.
- The Call committee continues their work on identifying a candidate for our new pastor.
- We will continue educating on the shift to year-round stewardship which was started at the beginning of 2023 and hearing how each of St. Mary's Ministries are good stewards.

Remember the four phases of year- round stewardship:

- **DOWN Relationship with God:** Our practice of Stewardship can begin with how God has come down to us in love.
- IN What God has entrusted to our care: Then, discover all the resources God has
 entrusted to our care. We each have resources we can use to love God and our neighbor. We
 need only to look in to discover the abundance God has entrusted to us.
- OUT Relationship with our neighbor: Finally, look out to see the many ways God is calling us to love our neighbors both near and far. When we share the abundance God has entrusted in our care with our neighbor, we not only love our neighbor, but God.

Annual Financial Response:

- We are to be Stewards of Congregation community and God's abundance.
- Asking how might God be calling you to use the resources that God has entrusted to your care to love God and your neighbor through the mission and ministry of your congregation?
- Thanking those who give of their time, talents and treasure to your congregation.
- Telling the story of St. Mary's Lutheran Church. Illustrate how the gifts of time, talent and treasure are making a difference in your congregation.

February the Annual Financial Response will begin as the 2024-2025 MMP planning begins. Look for more information from the Finance, Stewardship and Reconnect ministries on the February events.

You will be seeing some new organizations using St. Mary's in 2024. The City of Kenosha Clerk has selected St. Mary's as a polling location for 2024 (Feb 20, Apr 2, Aug 13 and Nov 5th) and AARP will be providing free tax preparation (Tuesdays Feb - April).

Go Pray, Go Love, Go Serve Keith Richter, & MLC Council President

NURSE SUE—ADVOCATE FAITH & HEALTH—JANUARY, 2024

Dear Friends,

It is no secret that cracking into the ideas and feelings of a teenager can be a challenge at times. Emotional check-ins are an important way for parents to support the mental health of their children. Good communication about mental health between parents and teens can help parents get an idea about what is going well, recognize and work on any problems, teach approaches for handling stress and complicated situations.

If you are stressed and wondering how to start these types of discussions with your teen, you are not alone. There is no secret formula. Go ahead and ask your teen. If your questions are met with apprehension or snarky comments, remain calm and explain why you are asking. Stating your feelings openly is a great way to model the type of dialog you pursue to have with your teen.

Here are a few tips to get you started:

Be patient. Take it slow, don't push too much. Some teens find it uncomfortable at first. Follow their signs about how much they want to share at first.

Short conversation is still helpful. Some teens will reveal and tell lots of details while others will give brief conversations. Brief updates might give enough information. If your teen is toiling or at risk of having a problem, be more persistent for safety and well-being.

Do not give up. Asking questions shows support and this alone can make a difference. Sometimes asking the teen how you could better communicate can be a productive conversation. Effort means something and overtime will hopefully result in improved communication.

Find the appropriate time. Check in times for parents and teens differ. Look at the flow of your day and what might work. Find time when you are not distracted and can be alone with your teen. Consider asking your teen what time works for them

Make observations. When you are feeling concern for your teen, try using specific examples of what you observe. Take a curious calm approach which might be less confrontational and get a better response from your teen. This also is a good example for your teen as they learn to reflect on their own behavior.

Success is relative. Your teen is not going to share everything with you, but you are moving in the right direction with communication. Getting a teacher or therapist involved might even be a part of the communication that is requested.

It can be a challenge to get communication going with your teen. It is very important to support your teen during this chaotic developmental period in their life. When you ask, you communicate that you care. That message is always important and does make a transformation.

May the Lord bless and keep you as you strengthen your communication in your families

Shalom, Sue Quever RN, FCN Advocate Faith and Health Team



Sunday School Calendar

January 05: Friday Family Fun Night, Chili Cook-off 5:30-7:30 pm **January 07:** Movie and PJs 9-10:15AM, Teacher Planning Meeting

January 07: Shalom Center Volunteer 4:15-6:15PM

January 09: Youth Committee Meeting 6:30PM All are welcome!

January 14: Epiphany 2 Listen for God's call

January 21: Epiphany 3 God loves us and shows us mercy

January 28: Epiphany 4 Jesus is in charge (and it's a good thing)

Sunday School music time begins after Kids Connection, the kids return for Communion, and then have instruction until 10:30.

www.facebook.com/smlcsundayschool

Fish/Fusion Calendar

January 02: ELCA Youth Gathering Informational Meeting at SMLC 5:30PM

Any 8th-12th graders and their parents should attend

Youth Gathering is July 16-20th in New Orleans, Louisiana

January 08: FISH and Fusion

January 09: Youth Committee Meeting 6:30PM All are welcome!

January 14: Youth sing at Contemporary Service — 8:45AM

January 14: Cookies N Christ Bible Study

January 15: No FISH/Fusion— High School Finals Study Night

January 19-21: Middle School Winter Xtreme

January 22: FISH and Fusion

January 28: Cookies N Christ Bible Study

January 29: FISH and Fusion

FISH 6:00-7:30pm Fusion 7:00-8:30pm

www.facebook.com/smlcyouthed























Friday Family Fun Night!





Lutherdale Retreat Thank you to the Endowment Foundation for funding the retreat!







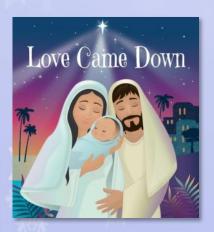




Sunday School Christmas Program M

















KEY CONTACTS—WHO DO YOU CALL?

CHURCH COUNCIL 2023-2024 St. Mary's Church Council meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6:30pm. Committee Meeting Day/Times to be reviewed. All are 1+(262) unless otherwise noted. Council liaisons are as follows:

AUDIT
Keith Richter697-2359/948-9020
ktrichter25@gmail.com
CARING
Lana Woller697-9908/945-7563
t.woller3@yahoo.com
CHURCH IN SOCIETY
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EDUCATION
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Nominating
Nominating Dana Larsen414-748-0448 dana.larsen.wdc@gmail.com
Dana Larsen414-748-0448
Dana Larsen414-748-0448 dana.larsen.wdc@gmail.com
Dana Larsen414-748-0448 dana.larsen.wdc@qmail.com PERSONNEL
Dana Larsen414-748-0448 dana.larsen.wdc@qmail.com PERSONNEL Andy Schroeder344-1902
Dana Larsen

Council Connection for January: Markie Hylinski. Contact her at 515-3032 hylinskim@gmail.com

ST. MARY'S STAFF: phone: 262-658-3555 or emails @stmaryslutheran.org Rev. Kathy Brown.....Interim Pastor ext. 333, (262)799-5791 or pastorkb@ Rev. Debbie Hartfield......Assoc. Pastor/Pastoral Care ext. 343. (262)599-5795 or pastordeb@ Nurse SueADVOCATE FAITH AND HEALTH COMMUNITY PROGRAM/CARE MINISTRY COORDINATOR Call the office or Fcn@ Beth Kerscher......ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT ext. 300 or bkerscher@ Sondra Kuro.....BOOKKEEPER ext. 323 or bookkeeper@ Reception.....info@ Kendra Richter......Youth Director kendra.richter13@gmail.com Deb Black.....ORGAN/PIANO ACCOMPANIST Laurel Borter.....PIANO Dr. Richard Sioerdsma.....ADULT CHOIR DIRECTOR Madeline Weirick......Jubilate! Handbell Director Art KotenkoSound/Video Technician **Church Office Hours:** Mondays/Tuesdays/Thursdays: 9:00am-3:00pm

> Wednesdays: Noon—6:00pm Fridays: 9:00am—Noon

<u>December 2023</u> Worship Attendance

2nd: 36 3rd: 113 9th: 28 10th: 111 16th: 25 17th: 103

23rd: 35

Christmas Eve 5pm: 150 Christmas Eve 8pm: 101 Christmas Day: 26 12/30: 32 12/31: 47

STAY CONNECTED when unable to join us for worship. You can watch these services online three ways:

- 1. Like our church Facebook Page
- 2. Watch Live on YouTube or On Demand (Live videos)
- 3. Watch videos from the church Website (by Tuesdays)

OPPORTUNITIES @ CHURCH ~ JANUARY 2024

WORSHIP ON SATURDAYS, 5PM & SUNDAYS, 9AM

Worship services' orders of worship will be the same, except when we celebrate a Holden Evening Prayer service at 5:00pm Saturdays and a Contemporary led service at 9:00am Sundays. Worship materials include using the ELW hymnal, printed bulletins, announcement sheets, etc. Printed material available online at our church's website under "uploaded documents".

Assisting Ministers: St. Mary's offers a special gift in assisting the pastor at each worship service. Sharing the altar space, lighting the candles, assisting with baptisms, reading the prayers and so much more meaningful sharing of the duties is what makes an Assisting Minister position vital to worship. We need more Assisting Ministers. Training is available.

Holy Communion at the railing or from your seat as needed; on weekends that are Holden/Contemporary (2nd Sunday each month) communion will be by intinction. Gluten-Free or regular wafer, wine or juice offered. Children who haven't received instruction yet, or anyone not receiving communion may come forward for a blessing instead. Simply fold your hands when approaching.

Sharing of Peace during worship will now be up to you: [the people] you may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you" or similar words. You may consider a gesture without physical touch, perhaps a slight bow, or crossing arms over the chest, as a symbol of an embrace. Offering: Passing the Plate Our ushers will once again enter the sanctuary space and pass the offering plates through the pews. You are welcome to give that way, online or mailing in your checks. Volunteer ushers needed for each service.

Contact church office.

Worship Greeters: We need greeters for Saturday nights AND Sunday morning. Volunteer greeters are needed, please contact Margaret Van Boven at 262-694-8281 or mav5804@gmail.com. (See the message from Worship/Music/Arts on the 2022 Worship Discussions on page 10)

MUSIC GROUPS

Adult Choir~ Rehearsals 7:00pm Wednesday nights, singing monthly on 1st, 3rd & 4th Sundays. Contact Dick Sjoerdsma, Deb Black or any member to join!

Contemporary Worship Team ~ Tuesdays (2x month) 5:45pm; sing monthly 2nd Sunday. Bjorn Hanson is the contact if you're interested in joining!

<u>Jubilate! Handbell Choir ~ Rehearsals 5:30pm Monday nights in</u> the sanctuary space. Jubilate! under the direction of Maddie Weirick again this year, plays in worship on the 1st Sunday of each month AND play for special occasions like Reformation Sunday. February 5, 2024 next time.





PRAYER BREAKFASTS

Tuesday Morning Women's Prayer Breakfast

All women are welcome to join us at 8:00am at The Hillcrest Restaurant, 6000 75th Street-Kenosha.

Wednesday Morning Men's Prayer Breakfast All men are welcome to join us at 7 a.m. Marina Garden near the entrance 5001 7th Avenue—Kenosha.

WOMEN'S CIRCLES

Miriam ~ 2nd Tuesday @1:00pm Circle of Friends ~ 3rd Wednesday @1:00pm Women's Book Club ~ 1st Tuesday @2:00pm Lydia Circle ~ 2nd Monday @ 12:30pm St. Mary's Quilters ~ Mondays @ 9:00am

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY

All children ages 11 and under are welcome to join us each Sunday morning after Kids' Connection to enjoy Music Time, Lesson Time and Sunday School fun! Registrations encouraged and you can follow us on Facebook here! Middle School (6pm FISH) & High School (7:00pm Fusion) ages are welcome to join us each Monday night downstairs in the Youth Room! Our staffed leader, Kendra Richter, and her group of awesome leads encourage all teens—no matter if they go here or to another church or at all! Check out the Facebook page here!

THE FRIENDLY CENTER—SENIOR MINISTRY

St. Mary's *The Friendly Center* is a senior ministry that has been around for a very long time. Here are some Facts about The Friendly Center:

- The Friendly Center meets once a month on Wednesday during the school year.
- The Friendly Center gathers for a devotion and meal over the lunch hour from 11:00 am until about 1:00 pm.
- The Friendly Center also provides an informative or entertaining program during each gathering.
- Calling All Volunteers!
- If you are an energetic, mobile person with a passion for senior citizens, we need you! We are looking for consistent volunteers to support the ministry of The Friendly Center in a variety of ways.

Volunteer Opportunities might include:

- set up crew
- clean up crew
- food prep and cooking
- plating food
- serving food
- making phone calls
- creating and sending the newsletter to name only a few! Call Lisa Zanin for more information or to sign up!







Funded by St. Mary's Lutheran Church Endowment Foundation, Lydia Circle and Women of the ELCA

DID YOU KNOW?

- 1. What does a pound of food mean to a food pantry?
- 2. Why is food measured in pounds by a food pantry?

Besides the private donations that a food pantry receives, most food panties depend on federal assistance to thrive.

There are certain guidelines that **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)** requires of food banks and food pantries to order to receive nutritious food to stock their facilities.

The food banks/pantries must account for the food in pounds that is distributed to individuals and families facing hunger. They must weigh all food that comes in their door and, likewise, account for the amount of food in pounds that is distributed each week/month.

If food pantries follow all guidelines, they are in the system to receive their share of the government food

inventory available to distribute. But Feeding America has many food banks and food pantries to supply food to. This is why private donations are so important for food panties to take care of the enormous amount of food needed to supply their quests.

So what does this mean to St. Mary's, the Grace Welcome Center, and red bags?

Each month, St. Mary's members have been supplying, on the average, 400 pounds of food to the Grace Welcome Center through the red bag program. The Grace Welcome Center provides each of the nearly 250 families that visit their pantry each week with 30-35 pounds of food. This amounts to about 35,000 pounds of food each month that the Grace Welcome Center distributes to our fellow neighbors.

The need is great and the Grace Welcome Center is indebted to your kind generosity.

Dear St. Mary's Lutheran Worshipers,

December 20, 2023

Our Worship, Music and Arts ministry team met recently to parse the information gathered in our listening sessions in November. With there being great participation and a lot of information, ideas and suggestions, a motion was made by WMA to rescind the Council's request for a decision to be made by December 31, 2023. We want to dedicate our January meeting to discuss this more fully. The council met December 14, 2023, and approved our motion to withdraw the initial

motion looking for a recommendation on Saturday evening services. At this time, our worship services will continue as scheduled, Saturday evening at 5:00 p.m. Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. and Holden evening the second Saturday of the month at 5:00 p.m. and a Contemporary worship service on the second Sunday of the month at 9:00 a.m. Thank you, once again, to all who shared their valuable opinions, time, and talents.

Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year, WMA Ministry Team





ST. MARY'S LUTHERAN CHURCH ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION has been supporting local community organizations for over 40 years with the income earned by the foundation's endowment funds.

During the year 2023, St. Mary's Lutheran Church Endowment Foundation funded numerous community programs and non-profit groups totaling over \$66000.

RECEIVING THE GRANTS:

- ⇒ Kenosha Area Family and Aging Services Inc. for their Music and Memory program.
- Wagner Family Fire Fund for personal hygiene products for displaced victims of fire.
- ⇒ Habitat for Humanity of Kenosha for handicap accessible bath facilities.
- ⇒ Kenosha Safety Patrol Fund for the new Training Center Project.
- ⇒ Shalom Center to support their ongoing ministry of care in our community which includes the Hope Hub and the Weinstock Education Center.
- ⇒ ELCA Outreach Center to assist the Kids Summer Camp Program, to help purchase personal care items for their clients, and to support their Immigration Law Library.
- Grace Welcome Center to support their ongoing ministry of feeding our community.
- ⇒ Concerned Citizens Coalition on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse to help fund their ATOD Awareness Program.

- ⇒ Walkin' In My Shoes for survival backpacks for both adults and children.
- Garden of Eatin for help in expanding their mission of growing food for our local food pantries.
- ⇒ Infant Moses Diaper Ministry located in Grace Lutheran Church for the purchase of diapers to assist in their mission.
- ⇒ *United Way of Kenosha County* to support the Readers are Leaders tutoring program.
- ⇒ Salvation Army of Kenosha County to assist in the purchase of gift cards for supplies and gas needed by their clients.
- ⇒ Luther's Lunchbox to assist Carthage College students that may need help with supplemental meals and acquiring personal hygiene products.
- ⇒ Open Wings Learning Community for the support of their Sensory Lab Project.
- ⇒ CUSH (Congregations United to Serve Humanity to support the Community Visibility Project.
- ⇒ Sharing Center, Inc. to support their ongoing ministry of feeding our western community.



To apply for a future grant or to make a donation to St. Mary's

Lutheran Endowment Foundation, follow the steps outlined on the website www.stmaryslutheran.org by clicking the St. Mary's Lutheran

Endowment Foundation link.

2024 GIVING ENVELOPES

For our members who use envelopes for giving, we appreciate your patience and flexibility throughout 2023. The Finance committee has worked to provide a method of providing envelopes to you in a more financially and resource friendly way.

On the weekends of **Dec 9/10** and **Dec 16/17** members who have historically used envelope giving were able to pick up a large envelope with your name and giving number on it, volunteers gave them the number of envelopes they needed for 2024.

The envelopes you will be provided will have the following label for you to fill out your Name and/or Giving Number, the Date or Occasion (example: Lent / Thanksgiving / etc.), and the Amount.

Going forward, you will be able to pick up a new packet of envelopes when you need to replenish your supply.

Name / Giving #	
Date / Occasion	
Amount	
The share of my treasure for the work of the Lord at St. Mary's Lutheran Church	

Remember, regular and special giving can also be made using the Tithe.ly application. If you have any questions about your envelopes or Tithe.ly, please contact the church office or Cari Richter, Financial Secretary 262-853-2359.



HE SPIRIT

ST. MARY'S LUTHERAN CHURCH the newsletter of

www.stmaryslutheran.org January, 2024

What's inside...

Dec Dec	2024 Attitude of Gratitude Campaign
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CELEBRATION OF THE 150 YEARS OF ST. MARY'S LUTHERAN CHURCH!

Stay tuned to the Spirit and announcements for SATURDAY JANUARY 20 & SUNDAY JANUARY 21, 2024. amazing story. The story continues the weekend of constitution was signed March 12, 1874. In 1876, St. church. It was called The Danish Church Society and a Mary's Lutheran Church was named. Our church has an January 22, 1874 was the actual date of the organized

Reconnections Team, Chris Johnson

want to miss.

discover the history and the connection we have from the

participation details. A year of events will allow more to

past to the present time. It will be a journey you won't

www.stmaryslutheran.org Kenosha, WI 53143 2001 80th Street St. Mary's Lutheran Church

